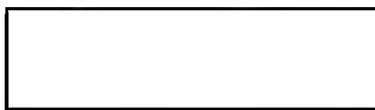


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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence

SUBJECT: Progress Report on Preliminary Analysis of Civilian Casualties Resulting from Bombing of North Vietnam

1. The closest approximation to an official North Vietnam total of casualties -- presumably both military and civilian -- is 75,000.

Only a few North Vietnamese official statements give casualty figures for specific incidents. They add up to total casualties of 692, of which 316 have been specified as killed and 214 as wounded. The North Vietnamese regime also claims that 124 schools and 30 medical installations have been bombed.

2. A careful analysis of all materials available [redacted] yields a minimum hard estimate of 223 civilian casualties of which 657 were killed and 156 were wounded.

[redacted]  
civil defense measures are effectively limiting civilian casualties, and that official claims of 75,000 casualties are a gross exaggeration for propaganda effect.

3. At this stage in our analysis, we are not ready to hazard a firm estimate of total civilian casualties. However, a first approximation has been made on part of the problem.

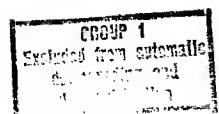
4. Most of the air attacks in North Vietnam have concentrated on an area including only 25 percent of the population, or 4.5 million persons. Within this area a total of 450 strikes -- excluding armed reconnaissance missions -- have been flown against 90 military and 67 economic targets, largely bridges, etc. These targets are located at 138 geographic points of which 10 are in uninhabited areas, 52 are in rural areas, and 14 are in urban areas. The total population of these points, and consequently the population actually exposed to air attack is 700,000 persons, predominately in urban areas.

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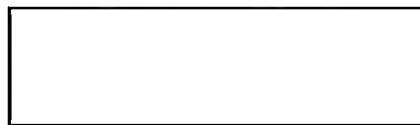
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5. Photo-analysis of five sample areas -- two rural and three urban -- indicates bomb damage to civilian buildings surrounding the immediate target area of 1 to 1.5 percent of total buildings in the area. If this damage can be applied to all bombed target areas and if physical damage can be directly equated with casualties, then the maximum estimated civilian casualties would range from 7,000 to 10,000 persons. This estimate does not allow for prior warning of an air attack or other civil defense measures, and therefore the estimate should be adjusted downward.

6. The above estimate excludes armed reconnaissance missions. If they were included the number of persons exposed to air attack would increase significantly. A preliminary appraisal of the damage resulting from armed reconnaissance missions also makes it probable that estimated civilian casualties would increase significantly. We propose to examine as much photography as possible on these strikes, and, by using the same factors as in strikes against other targets, to estimate a probable casualty number.

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Acting Director  
Research and Reports



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